

Message Text

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ACTION ACDA-19

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 AEC-11 CIAE-00 H-03 INR-11 IO-14

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SAM-01 SP-03 SS-20 USIA-15 TRSE-00 RSC-01 NSC-07

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FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3931

INFO SECDEF WASHDC

AMEMBASSY LONDON

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

USDEL MBFR VIENNA

USNMR SHAPE

CINCEUR VAIHINGEN

S E C R E T BONN 11491

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, PFOR, GW

SUBJECT: MBFR NEGOTIATIONS: FRG VIEWS ON PHASING

REF: VIENNA 155

BEGIN SUMMARY:SOUNDINGS IN BONN INDICATE THE
FRG INTENDS TO MAINTAIN ITS PRESENT POSITION ON PHASING.
THE GERMANS ARE LOATH TO CONSIDER PARTICIPATING IN A
PHASE I REDUCTION, CITING MANY FAMILIAR ARGUMENTS.
THE POSSIBILITY OF CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT AGREEING AT SOME
POINT TO BUNDESWEHR FIRST PHASE REDUCTIONS CANNOT BE
EXCLUDED ENTIRELY, BUT PRESENTLY APPEARS REMOTE. END
SUMMARY

1. OUR CONTACTS IN FONMIN, FMOD AND CHANCELLERY HAVE
NOT GIVEN ANY INDICATION OF A REDUCED FRG EMPHASIS ON
THE ALLIED APPROACH TO PHASING. ON THE CONTRARY,

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OFFICIALS WITH WHOM WE SPOKE ABOUT MBFR AND OTHER TOPICS

DURING THE COURSE OF THE PAST WEEK HEWED ALMOST WITHOUT EXCEPTION TO THE CURRENTLY AGREED NATO POSITION. THE OFFICIALS CITED MANY FAMILIAR ARGUMENTS ABOUT WHAT A FIRST PHASE BUNDESWEHR REDUCTION MIGHT LEAD TO. FOR EXAMPLE, THE BUGABOO OF NATIONAL SUBCEILINGS, THE SINGLING OUT OF GERMANY AS A SPECIAL REDUCTIONS ZONE AND THE EFFECT THAT SUCH REDUCTIONS MIGHT HAVE ON FUTURE EUROPEAN DEFENSE COOPERATION IN A UNITED EUROPE FIGURED PROMINENTLY IN GERMAN THINKING.

2.

WHEN THE SUBJECT WAS BROACHED, INVARIABLY GREAT STRESS WAS LAID UPON THE FACT THAT THE MODALITIES OF ANY SUCH REDUCTIONS INVOLVING THE BUNDESWEHR WOULD HAVE TO BE VERY CAREFULLY EXPLORED. ONLY ONE OFFICIAL OFFERED A PERSONAL OPINION THAT THE "FRG COULD THINK ABOUT IT IF ALL REDUCED." FROM OUR PERSPECTIVE IN BONN, IT WOULD APPEAR THAT THE GERMAN MBFR DEPREP IS CONSIDERABLY OUT IN FRONT IN HIS THINKING ABOUT THE DEGREE OF FLEXIBILITY IN THE TRADITIONAL FRG POSITION FAVORING THE PHASED APPROACH TO MBFR.

3. CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT IS INDEED ONE OF THE FOUNDING FATHERS OF MBFR AS HE INDICATED IN A CBS NEWS INTERVIEW ON JULY 7. HIS FATHERSHIP GOES BACK TO 1959 WHEN HE FIRST RAISED THE POSSIBILITY OF A MUTUAL REDUCTION OF FORCES IN A BUNDESTAG DEBATE. AT THE PRESENT TIME, HOWEVER, THE CHANCELLOR IS NOT HEAVILY ENGAGED IN MBFR MATTERS. HE IS MORE CONCERNED WITH THE PROBLEMS OF ECONOMIC STABILITY WITHIN GERMANY AND THE EC.

4. WHEN THE CHANCELLOR VISITS THE SOVIET UNION IN THE FALL, IT SEEMS TO BE A REASONABLE ASSUMPTION THAT BREZHNEV WILL BRING UP THE SUBJECT OF BUNDESWEHR REDUCTIONS. IT IS NOT POSSIBLE TO SAY AT THIS TIME HOW THE CHANCELLOR WILL REACT, BUT CERTAINLY ANY DECISION TO MOVE IN THE DIRECTION OF BUNDESWEHR REDUCTIONS FROM THE OUTSET WOULD BE FRAUGHT WITH MANY POLITICAL RAMIFICATIONS WHICH WOULD HAVE TO BE CAREFULLY CONSIDERED. THE MBFR NEGOTIATIONS PRESENTLY RECEIVE BI-PARTISAN SUPPORT IN
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BONN, BUT SUCH A SIGNIFICANT SHIFT IN THE FRG POSITION MIGHT ENGENDER POLITICAL DIFFICULTIES FOR THE GOVERNMENT WHICH IT MIGHT PREFER TO AVOID.
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